CSG Client Services Guide	Date Issued 10/1/07	Subject **Diversity and Cultural Differences**	Diversity
			Section **2300**

Chapter 23 - DIVERSITY

2300 DIVERSITY AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

2300.1 Related Websites:

- The International Speakers Bureau:
  Do a name search for Dr. R. Roosevelt Thomas, Speaker, at
  o www.internationalspeakers.com/

- Cultural Savvy:
  o www.culturalsavvy.com

- The Diversity Toolkit
  o www.thediversitytoolkit.com

- Diverse Issues in Higher Education
  o www.diverseeducation.com

2300.2 Definitions

- It is important that counselors are in agreement with what certain terms mean in the context of diversity issues. The terms (listed below) are not new, but many times they are used between people who do not agree on what they mean.
  o *Culture* – The customs, beliefs, laws, ways of living and all other results of human work and thought that belong to a people: In most Native American cultures, all land is thought of as common property.

  o *Diversity* – Differences among people reflected in a variety of forms, such as race, culture, perspective, talent, interest, age or religion.

  o *Anti-bias* – An active/activist approach to challenging prejudice, stereotyping, bias and the "isms."

  o *Bias* – Any attitude, belief or feeling that results in, and helps to justify, unfair treatment of an individual's identity.

2300.2 Definitions (continued)

- o *Prejudice* – An attitude, opinion, or feeling formed without adequate prior knowledge, thought or reason. Prejudice can be prejudgment for or against any person, group or sex.

- o *Racism* – Any attitude, action or instructional practice backed up by institutional power that subordinates people because of their color.

- o *Stereotype* – An oversimplified generalization about a particular group, race or sex, which usually carries derogatory implications.

2300.3 Best Case Practice

- Counselors need to:
  - o demonstrate sensitivity and awareness of stereotypical thinking about people because of their culture, race and gender.

  - o be aware of, recognize and correct their own cultural biases.

  - o understand the importance of a healthy, diverse work force.

  - o see people as individuals in order to attract, retain and motivate them.

  - o avoid stereotypes when interacting with individuals because they can pigeonhole people and their abilities, and stereotypes limit the way a counselor sees a person's true talents, ambitions and preferences.

- A "culturally competent service delivery" system involves the following key concepts:
  - o Cultural competence is a process that allows individuals to accept, respect and work with others who are different from themselves.

  - o Cultural competence is the result of awareness of your own biases and knowledge of the factors that influence cultural differences and similarities.

  - o The process requires the development of skills, attitudes and behaviors that allow individuals to understand and interact effectively with people from other cultures.

2300.3 Best Case Practice (continued)

- Counselors can effectively respond to diversity by:
    - Accepting personal responsibility for enhancing their own and their organization's effectiveness.

    - Demonstrating contextual knowledge. Know themselves, their organization, and understand key diversity concepts and definitions.

    - Having a clear understanding about requirements and basing decisions about differences on how they impact the ability to meet these requirements.

    - Understanding that diversity is accompanied by complexity and tension, and being prepared to cope with these in pursuit of greater diversity effectiveness.

    - Are willing to challenge conventional wisdom.

    - Engage in continuous learning.